



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Increasing Inner-City Access to Fresh Farm Produce

JEFFREY D. KLEIN June 14, 2010

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE, CITIES, HEALTH, NUTRITION, NEW YORK CITY**

Senate Passes Klein Bill to Help NYS Local Farmers Deliver Produce in Urban Areas

ALBANY, NY – State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeffrey D. Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) announced on Monday that the Senate passed his legislation to increase New Yorkers' access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. Klein's bill (S.6203/NYS Assembly same-as A.6408/Ortiz) authorizes the NYS Urban Development Corporation to offer loans and grants to local and regional farmers, making it easier for them to distribute and transport produce to grocery stores and green markets.

"As a matter of good public health, all New Yorkers should have access to farm fresh fruits and vegetables no matter where they live. This legislation helps small, local farmers distribute their produce to a much wider area, at no added cost to the taxpayer. I urge the Assembly and the Governor to join me in working to provide healthier food choices for all New Yorkers," said State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeffrey D. Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

Klein's bill is intended to encourage and aid local farmers to join forces with food distributors to distribute and transport their products to larger retailers throughout the state's metropolitan areas. By providing local farmers with the tools needed to distribute their products on a larger scale and in conjunction with other farmers, these small business owners can jointly cut down on overhead costs and make their products better meet the needs of bulk purchases and retailers.

Klein's legislation also provides for the assistance of regional farmers markets, many of which help to bring fresh fruits and vegetables to New York's urban areas in a more cost-effective manner. Specifically, Klein's bill provides the NYS Urban Development Corporation and the Empire State Development Corporation the authority to offer loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, or grants to local and regional organizations, to finance the distribution and transportation of New York grown farm products to grocery stores, supermarkets, greenmarkets, and similar merchants. At present, these organizations already have the ability to bond money to support other state industries, such as farming.